



YOUTH HOMELESSNESS ON THE RISE

By SOPHIA ROTHMAN, age 11



Kasey was homeless in Chicago for more than a year after she came out to her family. Forty percent of homeless youth are LGBTQ.



THE HOMESTRETCH

Briana DeMaio has been homeless since she was 12, when she and her family were kicked out of their Portland, ME, home six years ago. Every night, she struggles to find somewhere to sleep. Whether it's on a friend's couch or in a shelter, nothing is worse than sleeping outside, she told the *New York Times*.

"I was scared out of my wits," she said about her first time sleeping outside. "I never thought it would get that bad for me."

Currently, there are about 1.6 million homeless kids in the United States—an all-time high—according to the National Center on Family Homelessness.

Kids can become homeless because their families are homeless. Lack of affordable housing is one big contributor to homelessness. There are almost twice as many low-income would-be renters as there are available apartments, according to *ThinkProgress*.

Around 370,000 homeless children are on their own without their parents in a given week because they ran away or were kicked out. Up to 60 percent of all unaccompanied homeless youth were abused in their homes, and up 40 percent are **LGBTQ**. In Cincinnati, OH, Dedrick Hall was kicked out at age 17 when he came out to his mother as bisexual. Similarly, the 2014 documentary about youth homelessness in Chicago, *The Homestretch*, featured Kasey, who left home after coming out to her family as lesbian.

"Many LGBTQ youth fled homophobic or transphobic families or foster homes and have been forced to survive on the streets," Anya Mukarji-Connolly, supervising attorney, LGBTQ Law Project at the New York

Legal Assistance Group, told *IndyKids*.

School isn't easy for homeless children either. Eighty-seven percent of homeless children are enrolled in school, but only 77 percent attend regularly. Homeless kids often move around a lot, making them twice as likely to repeat a grade, according to the organization Doorways for Women and Families. They're also sick four times as often, and go hungry twice as often.

The government contributes funds to help the homeless, but it defines homelessness as people living on the streets or in shelters. Homeless families that "couch surf" by staying with friends or extended family end up getting less help.

Activists are working to help homeless children find permanent housing. Doorways for Women and Families helps homeless parents find jobs. In the last year, 83 percent of families leaving their shelter found permanent housing. Other organizations, like the Ali Forney Center in New York City and Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco, CA, provide housing and support for LGBTQ youth.

"Children can and do recover from being homeless, but they need services and support to do so, often even after they leave shelter," Laura Pennycuff, grants director at Doorways for Women and Families, told *IndyKids*.

LGBTQ: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer

Homophobic: Fear or hatred of people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual

Transphobic: Fear or hatred of transgender people, individuals who identify as a different gender than the sex they were assigned at birth



Young people settling into a shelter for the night.

THE HOMESTRETCH

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

Rise In Number of Homeless Children





YAYOI KOIZUMI

Meet... **Muku** from Japan

Name: Muku Yamaguchi

Age: 14

Lives In: Yokohama, Tokyo

Languages Spoken: Japanese, English

Parents' Jobs: University professors

Favorite Food: BBQ

Favorite Animal: Cat

Favorite Subjects in School: Math,
English and Art

Favorite Activity: Basketball

Favorite Flower: Cherry blossoms



HÉCTOR DE PEREDA/FLICKR

Japan at a Glance

Capital: Tokyo

National Language: Japanese

Population: 126,434,964

Geography: Japan is an island country in East Asia consisting of four main islands and 6,848 smaller ones extending to the north and south. Perched on the Pacific Ring of Fire, it experiences frequent volcanic eruption and earthquakes. The country is mostly mountainous and forested, and habitable areas are densely populated.

Interesting Fact: Samurai are from Japan. They were the warrior class that emerged in the late Heian period (794–1185) and were the ruling class during the Edo period (1603–1868).

Brief History: Japan has a long history with archeological records dating back to 30,000 BC. The current government was established after WWII. The new government adopted the Peace Constitution in 1947 which proclaims that Japan renounces warfare and military aggression. The Constitution was nominated for the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize.

By YUUKI REAL, age 14



43

The number of students from the Ayotzinapa Rural Normal School near Iguala, Mexico who have been missing since September 26, 2014. Source: Al Jazeera

nation&world

43 Students Missing in Mexico

By MARIANNE NACANAYNAY, age 12, and *IndyKids* Staff



On September 26, 2014, 43 students training to become teachers at Raul Isidro Burgos Rural Normal School of Ayotzinapa near the city of Iguala, Guerrero, in southern Mexico were declared missing after being attacked by local police.

The students were mostly *campesinos* (rural farm workers) who were studying at the school to become teachers in their communities. Rural normal schools in Mexico were established in the early 1900s after the Mexican Revolution in order to increase literacy and education in rural areas. The Raul Isidro Burgos Rural Normal School has a long history of activism, and their students frequently participate in protests against government corruption, state violence and recent education reforms.

Families of the missing students still insist that their children are alive

and need to be found. After meeting with Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, Epifanio Alvarez, the father of one missing student, was frustrated by the government's limited response: "This meeting is the same as always. There really is no answer from anyone."

Government, police and military officials have been tied to the crime. The mayor of Iguala and his wife were arrested on November 4, suspected of being involved. But a December 13, 2014 report in the Mexican magazine *Proceso* claimed that the federal government, not just local officials, was involved in the attack on and disappearance of the students. "The president has to take responsibility," said Emiliano Navarrete, another father of one of the students.

Since the students' disappearance, there

have been massive demonstrations throughout Mexico and in major global cities calling for justice. Protesters say that it is one of many cases that shows how closely government officials are often tied to violence. Bernardo Hernandez, one of the many protesters critical of the government, said, "We have had enough of these corrupt puppets. It is time we put in politicians who have a basic level of honesty and respond to what we want."



KINOLUIGGI/FLICKR

Young protesters in Mexico holding a sign that says, "The families demand that their sons are found."

Obama Takes Executive Action on Immigration

By ELEANOR HEDGES-DUROY, age 12



On November 20, 2014, President Barack Obama unveiled a new executive action which protects approximately four million undocumented immigrants from deportation. The action applies to parents of United States citizens who have lived in the United States for five or more years.

President Obama said the immigration reform is "about who we are (as) a country and who we want to be for future generations." He asked, "Are we a nation that accepts the cruelty of ripping children from their parents' arms, or are we a nation that values families and works together to keep them together?" Like his 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive action, this new action temporarily prevents deportation for qualifying immigrants, but does not provide a path to citizenship. Approximately six million undocumented immigrants are still not covered by DACA or the new executive action.

Republican leaders who oppose the action believe that the president is overstepping the presidential powers granted under the Constitution and claim that he does not represent the will of the American people. "We will not stand idle as the president undermines the rule of law in our country,"

said House Speaker John Boehner.

Immigrant rights advocates applaud the executive action for reducing pressure on undocumented immigrant communities, but are disappointed that it does not offer a path to citizenship. They are calling for congressional legislation on immigration. In a November 21 interview with Democracy Now!, activist Maru Mora Villalpando remarked, "This is just a temporary relief. This is not permanent. It's not really immigration status."



MICHAEL FLESHMAN/FLICKR

Immigrant rights advocates applaud the executive action for reducing pressure on immigrant communities, but are disappointed that it does not cover all undocumented immigrants nor offer a path to citizenship.

indykids!

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Just contact *IndyKids*! Adults and kids can write articles, take photos, contribute artwork and help distribute the paper.

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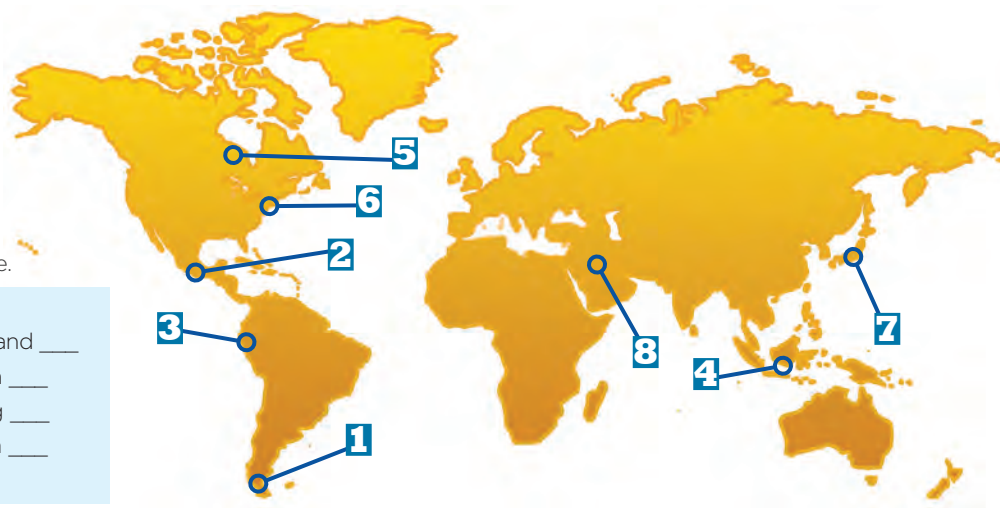
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Where in the World?

All the places listed below are mentioned in this issue. Can you match them with their general location on the world map at right? Answers are at the bottom of this page.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Japan ____ | e) Staten Island ____ |
| b) Ayotzinapa ____ | f) Patagonia ____ |
| c) Iraq ____ | g) Winnipeg ____ |
| d) Lima ____ | h) Indonesia ____ |



Destruction of Iraq's Cultural Heritage

KID By LILY KUZMINSKI, age 10

Since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, much of Iraq's cultural heritage has been destroyed: One million books, ten million other documents and 14,000 archaeological artifacts have been lost.

U.S. military planners usually try to prevent the destruction of cultural heritage sites and artifacts, but they did not do this during the second invasion of Iraq. While museum officials in Baghdad hid some precious objects before the invasion, many were still stolen or destroyed. In 2003, the U.S. military built a base on top of the site of the 5,000-year-old Mesopotamian city of Babylon. Buildings that were damaged or destroyed include ancient Babylonian structures, the ninth century Mosque of Samarra and 4,500-year-old Sumerian temples. This is a violation of the [Hague Conventions](#), which states that the cultural heritage of a country must be protected.

Many of the artifacts are sold illegally. Some of them are being plundered by the invading armies. "U.S. and



The ninth century Mosque of Samarra was damaged during 2005 fighting in Iraq.

Turkish soldiers are still stealing treasures today and selling them across the borders with Jordan and Kuwait, where art merchants pay up to \$57,000 for a Sumerian tablet," said writer Fernando Báez.

The extremist Islamic State (ISIS) is also contributing to the destruction of Iraq's cultural heritage. ISIS claims that certain ancient structures, artifacts and documents violate their religious beliefs, so they have been selling them to finance their military campaign or destroying them altogether.

Iraqi-born archaeologist Lamia Al Gailani Werr told *The National*, "The destruction is so bad, it will be impossible to restore them. This is catastrophic to Iraq's heritage."

Hague Conventions: A collection of treaties and declarations agreed on in 1899 and 1907 that included international laws about war and war crimes

Lack of Paid Family Leave Stretches New Parents

By ELEANOR HEDGES-DUROY, age 12

The United States has one of the least progressive parental leaves in the world. In fact, the United States, Oman and Papua New Guinea are the only countries without a legal requirement for employers to provide paid leave. Sweden offers 480 days of paid leave for parents to split before a child turns eight.

In contrast, the American Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) guarantees that a new parent's job will be held for 60 days, but it does not guarantee payment during leave. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 11 percent of private sector employees, 16 percent of state employees and no federal employees are offered paid parental leave. When FMLA time is exhausted, parents must return to work or lose their jobs; this places a burden on parents who must pay high sums of money for adequate childcare.

New parents need time off work after birth or adoption to become familiar with their new children, rest and adjust to changing life circumstances. Lack of paid parental leave harms working-class, lower-middle-class and single-income families across all races. Also, female-headed African-American or Latino families are more likely to be already living below the poverty line.

Currently three U.S. states (California, Rhode Island



New parents need time off work after birth or adoption to become familiar with their new children, rest and adjust to changing life circumstances.

and New Jersey) offer paid parental leave ranging from 20-30 days at less than 50 percent pay, but even these lag far behind:

United Kingdom (280 days at 90% pay) • France, Spain and Netherlands (112 days at 100% pay) • Italy (140 days at 80% pay) • Russia (140 days at 100% pay)

In an open letter to President Obama, writer Regan Long asks the president to rethink U.S. family leave laws. "As one mother speaking on behalf of hundreds of thousands of hard-working mothers, please *protect* this vital time for a mother and newborn."

newsbriefs



U.N. Climate Change Talks Held in Lima, Peru

By MARIANNE NACANAYNAY, age 12

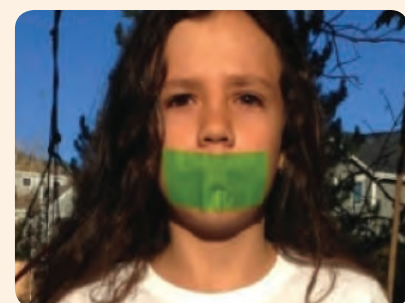
The United Nations Conference of the Parties on Climate Change held its 20th annual gathering in Lima, Peru, from December 1 to 12, 2014, to find ways to slow global warming. The conference aimed to build upon a climate agreement which will be placed into effect in 2020. The Kyoto Protocol, the last agreement made, was unsuccessful in limiting the emissions of greenhouse gases.



Protesters Demand Justice for Eric Garner and Michael Brown

By EVANGELINE COMEAU-KIRSCHNER, age 9

Massive protests erupted in New York City and nationwide after a grand jury's decision not to indict (formally accuse) police officer Daniel Pantaleo in the chokehold death of Eric Garner, a black man in Staten Island, NY. This comes only nine days after the same ruling was announced in Ferguson, MO, about the police shooting of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown on August 9, 2014. Protesters have been marching through the streets, staging "die-ins" and occupying public spaces to voice their frustration with police brutality against people of color throughout the country.



11-Year-Old Takes Vow of Silence Over Climate Change

By SADIE PRICE-ELLIOTT, age 13

Eleven-year-old Itzcuahtli Roske-Martinez undertook a 45-day vow of silence to demand action toward climate change at the end of October 2014. He received support from youth around the world, as well as actor and climate activist Mark Ruffalo, who called his campaign "brave and thoughtful." Itzcuahtli is proving that anyone can make a difference when they are passionate about an issue. "When I say world leaders, I'm talking about us," he said.

MILITARIZATION OF YOUTH

Military Recruitment in Schools

By SADIE PRICE-ELLIOTT, age 13



At most public high school job fairs in the United States, students will run into military recruiters. In 2001, the **No Child Left Behind Act** passed, containing a small section requiring public schools to give over all student contact information to the military and allow recruiters to visit the school. Students are permitted to **enlist** at the age of 17 with parental consent.

Recruiters aim to portray joining the military as a positive experience with many benefits, including help with college tuition, advanced technical and specialty training, opportunities to travel and a pension upon retirement. Matthew Tomlin, a 17-year-old enlistee, said, “They pay for your college, and with the economy the way it is, there’s not that many jobs around. So I figured it was good.”

According to a 2008 American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) report, while the government claims that children younger than 17 are not eligible for recruitment by the military, kids as young as 14 may register for Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC). “JROTC ‘cadets’ receive military uniforms and conduct military drills and marches, handle real and wooden rifles, and learn military history and behavior,” the ACLU reported.

Military recruiters rely on many other tools to attract young people. For example, military mascot “GI Johnny” visits community events across the country to meet kids and parents. Recruiters also set up massive high-tech trucks filled with military-style gaming stations in high school parking lots. Their tactics seem to be working. Professor of peace studies at Clark University Sam Diener, told *VICE*, “Both the ROTC and the military recruiting trucks are ways in which youth in the United States are militarized.”

Recruitment efforts often focus on students with limited career options and little financial support. According to an Associated Press analysis, almost three-fourths of U.S. troops killed in Iraq were from towns where the income per person was below national average. New York City Councilman Charles Barron said, “It is our communities where our young people now see the military as an economic option. It’s not that they’re all that patriotic; it’s just that it’s an economic opportunity because all of the other opportunities are closed down.”



ARMY RECRUITING/FLICKR

Kids playing with weapons at a military recruitment tent outside of an Army football game in Texas.

Glossary of Terms

- Civilian** - a person who is not in the military or police force
- Enlist** - to sign up for military service
- No Child Left Behind Act** - an education act that included requiring schools to track students’ performance through standardized tests and to hand over students’ contact information to the military for recruitment purposes
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** - an anxiety disorder that can occur after a person has experienced extreme emotional distress, especially involving dangerous or life-threatening situations



US ARMY/FLICKR

Soldiers speak with JROTC “cadets” at a school in New York. Students as young as 14 are allowed to join this program.

Army recruitment vehicles like this one travel around the country to visit schools and communities, encouraging young people to consider military careers.



US ARMY RDECOM

Returning Home: Veterans and Reality After War

By EMILY HERNANDEZ, age 12, and *IndyKids* Volunteer, NANCY RYERSON



Veterans come home from war with challenges to face like homelessness, joblessness, **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, disabilities and lack of medical care.

One of the biggest challenges veterans face is PTSD. Some soldiers find it hard to become **civilians** again because they get flashbacks about the war, causing them to feel unsafe. Mental health challenges may be one reason the unemployment rate among veterans is at nine percent, compared with seven percent in the general population. For veterans 18 to 24, the unemployment rate was 21 percent in 2014.

The high unemployment rate among veterans might seem surprising given the military’s focus on discipline, leadership and problem solving, all skills companies say that they value in employees. Some veterans feel that employers don’t want to hire them because they believe PTSD will make them unreliable.

The number of homeless veterans is decreasing, thanks to increased federal funds and new programs. There are currently 12,700 homeless veterans, about 12 percent of the adult homeless population, which is a 33 percent decline from 2010.

Still, activists such as Iraq Veterans Against the War feel that the government does not do enough to support veterans once they return home. Timothy Paige, a former Air Force pilot who developed PTSD in 2005, told *USA Today* that he felt discriminated against even for federal jobs: “[Interviewers] were straight out, ‘We don’t want disabled veterans and the problems that come with them.’”



PATRICK HANEY/FLICKR

A sergeant who operated the GI Johnny mascot told *Recruiter Journal*, “Parents love to bring up their little kids to meet with Johnny... Teachers take pictures while their kids shake my hand. The kids love it. The little kids are very comfortable with Johnny.”

Fighting Back: Counter-Recruitment Efforts

By ALEJANDRA PAULINO, age 13



In March 2005, on the second anniversary of the Iraq War, college students around the country organized protests against military recruitment in schools. They joined a longer counter-recruitment movement in the United States that dates back to the end of the draft in 1973. But the movement was made stronger after military recruitment increased with the Iraq War.

With increased access to student contact information since the passage of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, the military has been able to recruit more easily in high schools and colleges. But parents can block a school from sharing their children’s information to recruiters by signing an opt-out form.

In a *New York Times* article, Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, said that sometimes parents don’t get these forms or they don’t know that they have a choice to stop military recruiters from getting hold of their child’s information.

Organizations like Veterans for Peace and Iraq Veterans Against the War help students learn about the consequences of joining the military. Counter-recruiters go into schools and show students alternatives to joining to the military. They explain that there are other ways of getting into college, and they remind students that the military is risky and dangerous. The War Resisters League offers a guide to students about how to keep recruiters off campus.

In a *USA Today* article, Jim Murphy, a counter-recruiter with Veterans for Peace, said, “I don’t tell kids not to join the military.” He added: “I tell them: ‘Have a plan for your future. Because if you don’t, the military has a plan for you.’”



DEBRA SWEET/FLICKR

Young people involved with the We Are Not Your Soldiers anti-recruitment campaign prepare a protest banner in New York City.



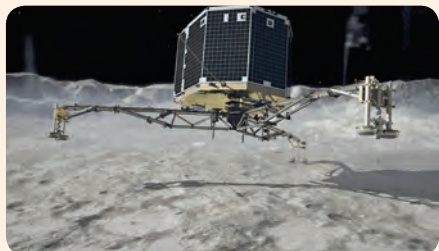
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SOUTHEAST REGION

Plastic from Clothing Fibers Polluting Oceans

By LARA GALINARI, age 11



In 2011, a study by ecologist Mark Browne showed that tiny fibers from artificial clothing were being released into the ocean. These fibers could be the largest source of plastic in the oceans, which cause damage to the environment. Browne tried to partner with leaders of big clothing brands like Nike and Patagonia to develop “new, more durable materials that do not emit so much microplastic,” but nobody agreed.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Philae Lander Touches Down on Distant Comet

By ELEANOR HEDGES-DUROY, age 12



In March 2004 the European Space Agency (ESA) launched the space probe Rosetta. On November 12, 2014, Rosetta launched the Philae lander, and despite some trouble, Philae successfully landed on Comet 67p/Churyumov-Gerasimenko—6.4 billion kilometers from Earth. Scientists hope data from Philae will help them understand the origins of Earth’s water and consequently, life on Earth. Philae spent five days collecting data before it shut down on November 17, 2014. ESA scientists hope Philae will revive when the comet turns, allowing the sun’s light to hit its solar panels. The ESA’s ability to land Philae on a comet so far away, after 20 years of preparation and 10 years in space, marks an important new era in space exploration.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Largest Dinosaur Unearthed in Argentina

By ALICE CHEKUNOVA, age 10



Dreadnoughtus schrani holds the place for the largest dinosaur ever discovered. This 65-ton (130,000 pounds) herbivore lived about 77 million years ago and died in Patagonia, Argentina. In 2005, Paleontologist Kenneth Lacovara discovered the first bone and worked with a team until 2009 to unearth the skeleton. Lacovara names it “Dreadnoughtus,” which means “nothing to fear,” because although it was a plant-eater, its massive size and weaponized tail would have protected it from any carnivores.

130,000 pounds

The estimated weight of the recently unearthed Dreadnoughtus dinosaur. That’s more than the combined weight of eight African elephants. Source: *New York Times*

culture&activism

Frackquakes: Does Fracking Trigger Earthquakes?

By MATTHEW DOTY, age 11



Fracking (short for hydraulic fracturing) is a process used to release natural gas and oil trapped in shale rock deep underground. The process involves pumping high-pressure water, chemicals and sand into the ground to crack the rock and free the fossil fuels. The process is controversial, as it has been associated with the contamination of drinking water. Recently, however, the concern is more jolting.

The United States Geological Survey reports that in the Midwest, “More than 300 earthquakes above a magnitude 3.0 occurred between 2010 and 2012, compared with an average rate of 21 events per year observed from 1967 to 2000.” Scientists believe that the increase in quakes is linked to fracking.

The shale gas industry denies these claims. The organization Energy from Shale refers to an Oklahoma Geological Survey that states, “It is impossible to say with a high degree of certainty whether or not these earthquakes were triggered by natural means or by the nearby hydraulic-fracturing operation.” Still, Austin Holland, who performed the Oklahoma study, believes that fracking has something to do with earthquakes occurring in his state: “The time period I looked at could explain about 10 percent of the earthquakes.”



FACES OF FRACKING/FLICKR

A fracking site in California, where 54 percent of active new wells are within 10 miles of active fault lines.

If a fracking-induced earthquake occurred near the location where the toxic wastewater is stored, people and animals could be exposed to the poisons through contaminated drinking water. If the earthquake occurred in an area that already has large faults, it could further destabilize them, resulting in an even larger earthquake. In California, 54 percent of active new wells are within 10 miles of active fault lines.

In a 2014 report, Clean Water Action researcher Andrew Grinberg writes, “The more we learn about California’s oil industry, the more cause we find for alarm.”

Are Gendered Toys Affecting How Kids Grow Up?

By ABIGAIL RABITT, age 10



Many toy companies, retail stores and websites are creating and sorting toys by gender: a pink section for girls, filled with dolls and toys that have to do with artistic creativity, and a blue or black section for boys that has fighting and action toys.

Let Toys Be Toys is a campaign that asks different toy industries to stop making children think they have to play with toys based on their gender. Although some people think boys and girls are naturally different and therefore shouldn’t play with the same toys, others think that these differences are created by being treated differently by adults and society. Let Toys Be Toys argues that girls might want to be architects when they grow up, while some boys might want to take care of their children.

Elizabeth Sweet, a researcher of gendered toys, says, “When all of the marketing consistently [all the time] revolves around gender, it teaches our kids to look at the opposite sex as a different species.”

Some experts believe that gendered toys lead children to develop skills in limited areas and could be one reason only 11 percent of engineers are women—“boys’ toys” are more geared toward building and problem solving. One new toy, GoldieBlox, encourages girls’ interest in science and technology by inviting kids to follow a story and build



JANISANFRAN/FLICKR

Some experts believe that gendered toys lead children to develop skills in limited areas.

mini contraptions to help the characters.

A parent in support of the Let Toys Be Toys campaign said, “My four-year-old daughter is now starting to get self-conscious walking into the ‘boys’ section to get her favorite things, and it’s heart-breaking to watch.” But maybe things are changing. A store in the United Kingdom called Boots sells toys and does not label them “boys” or “girls.” Instead, they put their toys in categories like age and toy type.

Meet IndyKids Reporter, Matthew Kue



MATTHEW KUE



By ADEDAYO PERKOVICH, age 11

Matthew Kue, age 11, has been reporting for *IndyKids* since March 2014.

Adedayo: What is your favorite thing to do in your spare time?

Matt: I like to shoot basketball with friends because while I am socializing, I am doing something that I love to do.

Is there an individual who has inspired you a lot over the years?

A basketball player named Ray Allen inspired me because in a sports film he said that determination and hard work got him to the NBA.

What do you enjoy the most about *IndyKids*?

I like going on the field trips because I learn more about the world. For example, at the Climate March I interviewed one kid and two adults and learned other people's perspectives about climate change.

What is your favorite food?

My favorite food is a bagel with cream cheese because the soft warm bread mixes in with the cold refreshing cream cheese. However, I eat bagels only once a week.

Do you have something that you always need to have near you when you are writing?

Yes, actually, I have a small Nerf basketball. This helps me gather new ideas when I look at it.

What is one of your favorite articles that you've written for *IndyKids*?

My favorite article that I have written was the story about Scotland and how close they were to gaining their independence from the United Kingdom. This was important to me because I realized that some people might not want to have their independence.

Someday, you could be a Social Worker, like Kait Klipsch

By NYLU AVERY BERNSTAYN, age 9



Social workers have many different kinds of jobs working with people who are struggling, often because of inequalities in society. At the Center for Court Innovation, Kait Klipsch works with clients who have been arrested and are therefore involved with the criminal justice system.

Nylu Avery Bernshtayn: What is a social worker?

Kait Klipsch: Social workers do a wide variety of things. Generally, social workers in the United States help people to access systems such as healthcare, education, child welfare or, in my case, criminal justice. Some social workers focus on individuals and families, such as therapy or counseling, while others work on a larger scale, such as community organizing, advocacy or policy change.

What does the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) do?

CCI begins its work with research, trying to learn what works and what doesn't in justice reform. We then use that knowledge to create new projects—both court- and community-based—to put these new ideas into practice. CCI then

takes what was learned to improve future projects and teach other organizations interested in trying similar projects.

Can you talk about the Alternatives to Incarceration program?

Our office, Brooklyn Justice Initiatives, runs a few alternatives to incarceration (being sent to prison) programs with different populations. Overall, we try to address the issues in a person's life that may lead them to being arrested, with the goal of avoiding jail and future involvement with the [criminal justice] system. We provide many services, including individual and group counseling. In counseling, we try to identify and address the individual and communal challenges that affect people's lives. Going to jail can be traumatizing and life-altering. This is especially important for youth—in New York, people as young as 16 are sent to adult jail and prison.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Without a doubt, my favorite part is meeting new people every day, hearing their stories and learning more about the world and myself. While it can be sad and frustrating to be confronted with



KAIT KLIPSCH

injustice every day, it is so encouraging to hear the ways in which people, families and communities are surviving and overcoming that injustice to create a better world for themselves, their families and their communities.

The Story of My Name

By ITZEL CORTES, age 10



Have you ever thought about the story of your name? After reading the book *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes, I decided to ask my mom about the story of my own name.

My mom (Leticia Garcia) named me Itzel because she saw it once in a magazine and thought it was unique. She asked my dad (Mario Cortes) if it was good, and he said he thought it was distinctive and beautiful. So when I was born, they named me Itzel. "Nice!" I said, but was curious to know if this unique name had a special meaning.

After researching my name I found that it means "white flower" and "rainbow lady" in **Mayan** language and mythology. Itzel was a Mayan Goddess (Ix Chel) of the Earth, the moon and medicine. She often had a snake in her hair and crossbones embroidered on her skirt.

I eventually discovered that my name was not my only connection to Mayan culture—my ancestors had Mayan blood! I started thinking more about my Mexican roots.

It was very important to my parents that I learn English and adapt to American culture, and from second grade on I was in English-only classes. Little by little, I have lost my Spanish. My dad only speaks Spanish, so, sadly, since I feel more comfortable speaking English, we cannot communicate easily with one another. He also feels badly that he cannot speak English as well as my mom and I can.

When immigrants like myself lose our native language, we are losing a part of our culture too. That is why I feel proud of my name and to know more about my ancestors and culture. I pledge to keep my roots and cultivate them by using my native language of Spanish and by sharing the story of my name.

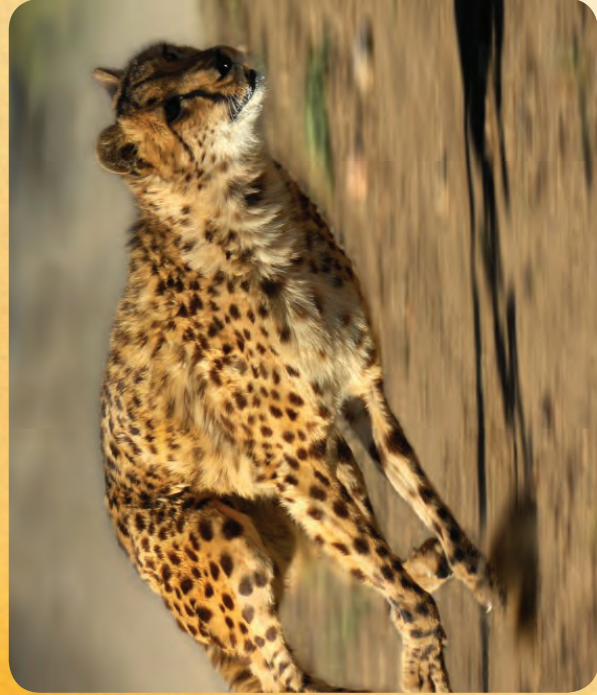
Maya people: a diverse population of Native Americans from Mexico and northern Central America



CLAUDIA HIRSCH

Itzel Cortes with her mother, Leticia.

GETTING WILD WITH THE CHIEFTAH



By BRYANNA SANTOS, age 9

Cheetahs are large and powerful felines that are now an endangered species. There are only 7,000 to 10,000 cheetahs left in the world. One reason they are endangered is because people hunt them for the beautiful pattern on their fur. They once lived across a number of continents, but today the cheetah's biggest threat is habitat loss. They now primarily live in Africa, Asia and some parts of Europe.

Cheetahs have long, slim bodies that are covered in black spots. Their long tails help them balance and change direction. Strong and powerful hind legs and a flexible, muscular spine enable these cats to run up to 75 miles per hour.

Cheetahs are carnivorous—they kill other animals for the nutrition they need to survive. They have excellent eyesight, which helps them hunt food easily. They mainly eat large herbivores. Some of the cheetah's prey include gazelles, wildebeests, antelopes, lions, hyenas, eagles, vultures and hares.



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 B X R

By PAULA PAULINO,
age 9, and EVANGELINE
COMEAU-KIRSCHNER, age 9

1. I was born September 24, 1925, in Winnipeg, Canada.
2. My work began as an Anglican parish priest in western Quebec.
3. In 1954 I moved to Toronto and started working in a cardboard box factory. I believed we should always share the working class's social struggles, which is why I considered myself to be a "worker-priest."
4. I was a strong social justice advocate, for rights of refugees. I also campaigned in Canada and abroad.

peace activist and fought for the rights of refugees. I also campaigned against poverty and homelessness in Canada and abroad.

5. I was proud to serve as Toronto alderman and Canadian Member of Parliament with the New Democratic Party after campaigning against poverty, homelessness and war.
6. I participated in protest marches, sit-ins and picket lines and sometimes got arrested.
7. In the early 1980s I helped put together the Housing Not Hostels Coalition for homeless people.

8. After my death on April 24, 2014, my son posted a message about my life, describing me as a “Pacifist, socialist, worker-priest, marxist Anglican, trade-unionist, city councillor, member of parliament, civilly disobedient marcher for human rights. Wearer of red shirts, cyclist, paddler of canoes, singer of songs.”

Answer on bottom of page

**“LIVING FOSSIL” OFFERS GLIMPSE
INTO PREHISTORIC TIMES**

By OWEN ARNOT, age 9



Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer with the first coelacanth discovered alive in 1938.

The coelacanth (pronounced “see-la-kanth”) is a rare fish that is found near northern Sulawesi, Indonesia and in the western Indian Ocean. Scientists thought coelacanths went extinct 65 million years ago, until Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer discovered one alive in 1938. A second kind of coelacanth was found in 1999. The coelacanth’s scientific names are *Latimeria chalumnae* and *Latimeria menadoensis* both named after Latimer.

Some scientists believe that coelacanths could be an evolutionary link between ancient fish and the first land-dwelling mammals. Their unique lobed fins share some characteristics with human limbs, earning it the nickname, “Old Four Legs.” Also, unlike other fish, they give birth to their offspring rather than laying eggs. Their population numbers are unknown, and scientists suspect that they are endangered.

Coelacanths live in temperate waters up to 2,300 feet below the water off rocky slopes of volcanic islands. They come in three different colors: yellow, brown and blue. The coelacanth grows up to 6.5 feet in length and can weigh nearly 200 pounds.

Scientists say that this “Living Fossil” has been around for nearly 400 million years, meaning that it was swimming in Earth’s oceans before the time of the dinosaurs.